Post 6/30/74

VIP

Mideast Gifts

By Maxine Cheshire

Egyptologists in this country and elsewhere in the world are anxious to know more about the 16th-century B.C. statue that President and Mrs. Sadat recently presented to President and Mrs. Nixon.

The seated figure is of the ancient goddess Hathor and was dug up in Cairo. It is made of bronze with gilt decorations and housed in a wooden shrine.

Hathor was the goddess of heaven, sometimes known as "The Lady of Terror" because she destroyed the enemies of the Sun God.

An expert at the Metropolitan Museum in New York estimated last week that the statue is worth somewhere between $20,000 and $100,000. The Met, the expert said, paid "around $20,000" recently for a less important seated figure of the same goddess, without the shrine and without a provenance.

The statue is expected to go on display for tourists this week in a lobby in the East Wing of the White

See VIP, H7, Col. 1

VIP, From H1

House, along with other gifts presented to the Nixons on their Mideast travels.

Bearing Gifts

The General Services Administration, which is responsible for the National Archives, doesn't know what to do with a "freight-car-full" of relatively inexpensive gifts given to Spiro T. Agnew while he was Vice President.

The list of gifts fills three loose-leaf notebooks. Most are from Americans and are therefore legally Agnew's property. The GSA says few, if any, came from foreigners and are worth more than the minimal value of $50 that would make them automatically the property of the United States government.

Agnew sent the gifts to the Archives while he still had the authority to store things there as an official.

Now GSA is in a legal bind. It can't get Agnew to say what he wants done with his packing crates. He won't talk with them on the phone and his lawyer, a GSA spokesman said last week, has been "almost rude" in response to inquiries.

Should Agnew continue to ignore calls, a spokesman said, GSA could elect to throw the stuff out or put it up for auction.

The agency is required only to provide storage for a "reasonable time" after an official leaves office. Agnew resigned last October.

© 1974, The Washington Post/Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate, Inc.

The statue of the ancient goddess Hathor, given to the Nixons by Egyptian President and Mrs. Sadat.